STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

THE ARMY'S COMMITMENT TO SUPPORTING THE HOMELAND SECURITY CHEMICAL, BIOLOGICAL, RADIOLOGICAL, NUCLEAR, AND HIGH-YIELD EXPLOSIVE WEAPON TERRORIST THREAT: CAN THE RESERVE COMPONENTS MEET THE REQUIREMENT BY THEMSELVES?

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL DONNIE P. ANDERSON
United States Army

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Donnie P. Anderson
United States Army

Colonel Joseph Robinson
Project Advisor

U.S. Army War College
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Donnie P. Anderson

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The United States Government has identified of highest priority the development of effective capabilities for preventing and managing the consequences of terrorists use of chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and high-yield explosive (CBRNE) materials and weapons on the American homeland. The Department of Defense (DOD) and Army both have a significant role in this effort. This paper will look at those roles and focus on the Army's ability to support the Homeland Security (HLS) CBRNE terrorist threat in the areas of agent sampling, detection, identification, and decontamination operations. Specifically, it will address the Reserve Components (RC) capability for responding to an incident and demonstrate the value-added of Active Component (AC) forces. The conclusion is the RC cannot fulfill the Department of the Army's commitment to this important mission by itself: AC forces must assume a more prominent role to ensure an adequate DOD response in this critical area.

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> Since 1996, the number of weapons of mass destruction threats called in to fire fighters, police and the FBI has increased fivefold. The threat comes not just from conventional weapons, like the bomb used in Oklahoma City, but also from chemical weapons, like the nerve gas agent that killed 12, but injured thousands in Tokyo, in the subway, just four years ago; and even from biological weapons that could spread deadly disease before anyone realized that an attack had occurred. I have been stressing the importance of this issue, now, for some time. As I have said repeatedly, and I want to say again to you, I am not trying to put any American into a panic over this, but I am determined to see that we have a serious, deliberate, disciplined, long-term response to a legitimate potential threat to the lives and safety of the American people.[1]
>
> —President Clinton

As articulated by President Clinton in remarks to the 17th Annual Legislative Conference of The International Association of Fire Fighters in Washington, D.C., on March 15, 1999, the potential threat of a weapons of mass destruction (also known as a chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, high yield explosive (CBRNE)) incident on the American homeland is real and it is something for which this country must develop a credible and legitimate response. Actually much has been done since 1995 when the first Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) by the Clinton Administration was published to address this issue. Millions of dollars have been appropriated by congress and all federal agencies that support the Federal Response Plan (FRP) have enhanced their capabilities including the Department of Defense (DOD) which is likely to play a major role in the event of a CBRNE attack on United States (U.S.) soil.

The DOD's efforts in a response will be in support of a Lead Federal Agency (LFA), either the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) as agent for the Department of Justice (DOJ) for crisis management or the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for consequence management. The majority of DOD assets will likely provide assistance for consequence management, which focuses on saving lives, protecting health and safety, mitigating risks, and responding to the effects of an incident.[2] Fewer DOD response forces are likely to engage in crisis management tasks, such as identifying terrorists, capturing them, rendering safe devices, and prosecuting perpetrators.[3] This is because these are principally law enforcement efforts with the exception of rendering safe devices. Indeed, DOD possesses the competencies and expertise to significantly bolster the overall Federal consequence management response. Therefore, DOD and "The Army" as its largest repository of technical expertise and specialized

force structure for nuclear, biological, and chemical defense must be prepared to assume a major role in the CBRNE defense of the homeland against a terrorist threat.

THESIS

Army support of a CBRNE event will be tiered. In concept, particularly in case of a surprise attack, the first tier of army responders will be from the National Guard (NG). Actually, to date much of DOD's CBRNE response funding and focus has been on enhancing the capabilities of NG assets. The NG (particularly the Weapons of Mass Destruction-Civil Support Team (WMD-CST)) is viewed as the army's primary early response means. In fact, guest speakers at the Army War College (AWC) and many written sources now identify the NG WMD-CSTs as DOD's "tip of the response spear" for a CBRNE incident. Even so, in light of the Department of the Army's (DA) recently published Homeland Security Army Strategic Plan, which makes it clear that homeland security (HLS) is one of its critical missions and will continue to be a significant commitment,[4] the question surfaces: can the WMD-CSTs, other NG assets, and U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) units—in other words the Reserve Components—meet the requirements and commitment DA has made to supporting homeland security (HLS) in general and the CBRNE terrorist threat in particular? This paper will specifically focus on that issue and demonstrate that the RC response (NG and USAR), by itself, is inadequate to support DA's commitment for dealing with the consequences of a CBRNE terrorist threat. It posits simply that active component (AC) army units should assume a more comprehensive role in supporting this mission. Research for this paper indicates it is "The Army"[5] (active and reserve components) which must be prepared to respond to a CBRNE event to protect health and safety, and mitigate hazards. The scope of this paper will, however, be limited to the consequence management tasks of supporting CBRNE agent sampling, detection, identification, and decontamination operations. It will not address other critical areas such as transportation, engineering, communications, and mass care.

BACKGROUND

> There is no single defense against this threat. Instead we must treat it as if it were a chronic disease, being constantly alert to the early symptoms and ready to employ, rapidly, a combination of treatments.[6]
>
> —William Cohen

From this 1997 statement by Secretary of Defense Cohen, one gains an appreciation for the complexity of the CBRNE threat and responding to it. Just as a chronic disease requires a

combination of treatments to protect the patient and mitigate it effects, the response to a CBRNE terrorist threat or attack requires the efforts of a number of Federal agencies to include the DOD. In the vernacular of treating a disease, DOD's most potent therapy is the army and the army's most potent sustained capability resides in the AC.

On the surface, because any CBRNE attack on the homeland can be viewed as a threat to our vital national interest (safety of our citizens and protection of our infrastructure), the average citizen might easily argue that if the RC response is inadequate and AC units can provide value-added, their capabilities should be used. Couple that with an environment in which the U.S. has no major peer competitor or threat, the perception might exist that the military needs to contribute more in order to be relevant and worth the tax payers' investment. On the other hand civil libertarians have a concern that such support of the homeland might invest too much power in the military and threaten American freedoms. That debate aside, the facts are the decision to fully commit AC units in support of homeland security is quite complex and must take into consideration many important issues: these include fundamental matters such as the purpose of the military, its most important missions, and the requirement to maintain a high level of readiness to execute its warfighting capability. Given that as a start point, it is essential to highlight what key aspects of U.S. policy, public law, strategy, military directives, doctrine, and planning documents declare about the roles and responsibilities for CBRNE homeland security and specifically the military/army role in support of homeland security CBRNE consequence management.

U.S. POLICY, LAW, AND NATIONAL STRATEGY

The possibility of a WMD terrorist incident directed against civilians resonated loudly in America after the 1995 sarin nerve agent attack in Tokyo. It was indeed the Tokyo attack in conjunction with the World Trade Center and Murrah Federal Building bombings that prompted the U.S. government to become more proactive in taking the necessary actions to reduce the vulnerability and risks to U.S. citizens from a potential WMD attack. The result was a major review of U.S. counterterrorism policy in 1995 that concluded with the implementation of PDD-39, *U.S. Policy on Counterterrorism*.[7] The overall objective of PDD-39 was to ensure that the U. S. is prepared to combat domestic and international terrorism in all forms. One tenet of the policy is to ensure the full range of necessary expertise and capabilities are available for consequence management in support of the Federal Response Plan (FRP).[8] This tenet is significant regarding DOD because of the tremendous expertise and capabilities it possesses on CBRNE defense.

In addition to PDD-39, PDD-62, *Protection Against Unconventional Threats to the Homeland*, was implemented in 1998. It reaffirmed PDD-39, but further it outlined the roles and responsibilities of supporting Federal Agencies. It stated that "in the event of a terrorism incident, the Federal Government will respond rapidly, working with State and local governments to deliver emergency assistance and restore order."[9] It also specified that Federal agencies and Departments so designated would train and provide equipment to first responders to better prepare them to respond to CBRNE incidents. But most importantly from the DOD perspective, it directed DOD to maintain trained military units to assist State and local responders.[10]

Complementing the two policy directives, the 1999 National Security Strategy (NSS) clearly identifies defending the American homeland from a CBRNE terrorist threat as a priority.[11] It acknowledges that potential enemies, whether terrorist or nations, may be more likely to resort to attacks against vulnerable civilian targets using unconventional means such as CBRNE. In fact, it states weapons of mass destruction pose the greatest potential threat to global stability and security . . . and that proliferation of advanced weapons and technologies threatens to provide the means for terrorists to inflict terrible damage on the United States.[12] Further one section of the NSS is devoted to Domestic Preparedness Against Weapons of Mass Destruction and states "The Federal Government will respond rapidly and decisively to any terrorist incident in the United States involving CBRNE . . . and will continue to develop and define a comprehensive strategy to protect the civilian population from nuclear, biological and chemical weapons."[13] Part of that strategy to protect the population includes the military as a supporting agency to the FRP.

Finally, under the umbrella of U.S. policy, national strategy and public law, the *Defense Against Weapons of Mass Destruction Act of 1996*, Public Law 104-201, was adopted due to shortcomings with PDD-39, the increased potential for threat to U.S. citizens from a CBRNE terrorist attack, and the lack of preparedness of the nation as a whole.[14] The Act required DOD to do the following:

- Designate an official as executive agent to coordinate DOD assistance to Federal, State, and local (FSL) officials in responding to biological or chemical threats;
- Develop and maintain a chemical/biological (C/B) domestic terrorism rapid response team to aid FSL officials in detection, containment and disposal of CBRNE materials; and
- Upon request of the Attorney General provide DOD resources, including personnel, to assist in an emergency situation.[15]

One provision in the WMD Act amended Chapter 18, Section 382 of title 10, U.S. Code. This provision stipulated the Secretary of Defense may provide assistance if he determines that such assistance would not adversely affect the military preparedness of the United States.[16]

MILITARY STRATEGY, DOD AND JCS GUIDANCE

The most recent National Military Strategy (NMS) was published in 1997. The NMS highlights the non-traditional threats—such as CBRNE—faced in the current security environment and the potential requirement for support of military forces. In the section on protecting U.S. national interests, it states: "military resources will continue to support civil authorities in executing missions such as . . .domestic crises".[17] Obviously a CBRNE incident translates to a domestic crisis.

In addition to the NMS, DOD guidance on supporting civil authorities is contained in DOD Directives (DODD) 3025.1, *Military Support to Civil Authorities* (MSCA), and 3025.15, *Military Assistance to Civil Authorities*. Though somewhat dated (published in January 1993), DODD 3025.1, is the principal directive by which DOD provides policy guidance and outlines responsibilities for the assignment and allocation of DOD resources to support civilian authorities during civil emergencies.[18] DODD 3025.15 is a bit more current (February 1997) and assigns responsibilities for responses to terrorism incidents including CBRNE.[19] Moreover DODD 3025.1 has a companion manual DODD 3025.1-M, *Manual for Civil Emergencies* (June 1994 publication) that provides guidance for the preparation, coordination, and execution of MSCA.[20] Some of the relevant points in the directives are:

- Subject to priorities of the President and Defense Secretary, all DOD resources are potentially available to MSCA;
- Generally, military operations other than MSCA will have priority over MSCA;
- Army and Air National Guard forces—not in Federal status—have primary responsibility for providing military assistance to State and local government agencies in civil emergencies; and
- The military services shall ensure all Active and Reserve Component military personnel are appropriately trained to enhance DOD MSCA capabilities.[21]

Guidance from the JCS is provided in instructions and joint publications. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction (CJCSI) (Draft) 3125.01, *Military Assistance to Domestic Consequence Management Operations in Response to a Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and High-Yield Explosive Situation*, provides guidance for DOD forces in the event of a CBRNE incident. The manual addresses availability of DOD forces and specifies that based on

adjusted priorities the National Command Authority (NCA) could redirect units from potential or current operations to domestic CBRNE operations.[22] This is definitely a departure from previous guidance on the use of the military for domestic consequence management.

Joint Pub 3-07.7, *Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Domestic Support Operations*, provides military guidance for the exercise of authority by combatant commanders and guidance for the Armed Forces in preparing appropriate plans for Domestic Support Operations (DSO).[23] The publication discusses, in general, the types of emergency responses (crisis and consequence management); the categories of DSO; roles and responsibilities for DOD; and command and control relationships when action is directed by the NCA. It emphasizes that specialized DOD capabilities must be used efficiently and military missions have priority over MSCA.[24] Also highlighted are DOD capabilities that can support the CBRNE consequence management mission. Of note in those capabilities is the absence of army chemical units that can conduct chemical agent sampling, detection, identification, and decontamination and those that conduct biological detection.

As a complement to Joint Pub 3-07.7 and in addition to U.S. policy guidance, DOD directives and the CJCSI, joint doctrine now addresses the military's specific role in CBRNE consequence management. In Joint Pub 3-11, *Joint Doctrine for Operations in Nuclear, Biological and Chemical (NBC) Environments*, there is a section on Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW) within the U.S. that focuses on military CBRNE consequence management support. Specifically, it highlights the role of Joint Task Force Civil Support (JTF-CS) in orchestrating the overall military CBRNE consequence management response effort. It is JTF-CS that will exercise operational control over all DOD forces except Special Operations and the Corps of Engineers.[25] The publication emphasizes that JTF-CS will assist only in a supporting role to a LFA in either crisis and/or consequence management. A key point is their plans include using the capabilities of active and reserve components.

ARMY DOCTRINE AND STRATEGIC PLAN

In the hierarchy of doctrinal publications, Field Manual (FM) 1, *The Army*, is the Army's capstone manual and describes the Army's purpose—what it does. A common theme throughout the manual is service to the nation. It supercedes FM 100-1 and acknowledges that army actions may include those that fall under the purview of homeland security. FM 1 lists the army's core competencies, one of which is support to civil authorities.[26] Although CBRNE consequence management is not specifically mentioned, the manual discusses the army's unique capability to support homeland security and further that prompt army assistance may be

a critical or decisive element in such support.[27] Because of the varied threats in the current environment from transnational organizations to state and non-state actors, the army (active and reserve) must be prepared to respond across the full range of military operations and work effectively with other forces and interagency partners.

The army's doctrine on DSO is in FM 100-19, *Domestic Support Operations*. It was developed to provide focus on domestic operations and fill a void that existed after the end of the Cold War due to the change in the national security environment.[28] The manual identifies four primary types of domestic support operations. Of the four, though not specifically addressed, CBRNE consequence management would fall under the type identified as disaster assistance. The manual also corresponds with other documents (DOD Directives) regarding a tiered military response by specifying the army's primary response force will be the National Guard. Further, it introduces the role of the defense coordinating officer (DCO) appointed by the supported commander-in-chief (CINC). Since FM 100-19 is extremely dated, it does not directly address either the CBRNE crisis or consequence management missions.

The army significantly expands on what's written in other doctrine and defines the roles and responsibilities of units and staffs in planning and executing integrated actions from a CBRNE response perspective in FM 3-11.21, Multiservice Tactics Techniques and Procedures (MTTP) for Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Aspects of Consequence Management. It serves to institutionalize interdepartmental and interagency coordination and planning, linking it to the national strategy. The manual addresses concepts, principles and fundamentals, to include planning, operational considerations, and training and support functions related to CBRNE consequence management.[29] It provides an inventory of essential military agencies that have capabilities to respond for consequence management support. Further, it acknowledges that for a no-notice incident, first responding units will likely be National Guard Civil Support Teams under state control and possibly other Reserve Component units.[30]

As the army's architect of the future, part of the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) mission is to develop doctrine and concepts. The TRADOC White Paper on supporting homeland defense was written to serve as a guide for the development of army doctrine. It provided the basic framework for the development of FM 3-11.21. It established the army conceptual position that RC units will provide much of the military capability for CBRNE detection, decontamination, etc.[31] It was also the first army document to make the point that because of their dispersion throughout the nation, Army National Guard (ARNG) and U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) units are ideally suited for CBRNE consequence management support to local communities.[32]

The most recent document on the army's role in support of the homeland security (HLS) CBRNE mission is the HLS Army Strategic Plan. This plan states:

> Supporting Homeland Security is a commitment that the Army recognizes. It is a critical mission. It is and will continue to be, a significant commitment requiring resources and planning. The Army will be prepared to provide forces . . . to prevent and mitigate attacks against the American homeland . . .[33]

The plan was developed to establish an army position on HLS and had an objective to implement changes to allow army support of all recognized HLS missions. It acknowledges limitations to providing support such as dual-missioned units that may not be available due to other commitments, but identifies table of organization and equipment (TOE) units as either current or programmed incident response forces.[34]

WMD RESPONSE CAPABILITIES

FEDERAL CAPABILITIES

Several U.S. agencies possess some capability for responding to a CBRNE terrorist incident. Therefore, the overall U.S. response to the threat of an actual terrorist CBRNE incident on the homeland will follow the interagency model as established by U.S. policy. The model identifies two distinct functions, crisis management and consequence management, that relate to a CBRNE terrorist response. As discussed previously, the FBI will be the Federal lead for the CBRNE crisis function and FEMA for the CBRNE consequence management function. Overall, crisis management is, in fact, the responsibility of the federal government and consequence management is the responsibility of state and local government.[35] Although policy is clear on who has the lead and what DOD's role is, the debate on roles and responsibilities continues. In a recent article on the need for homeland defense, former Defense Secretary (SECDEF), William Cohen, stressed that even though Congress has set up a program that makes local officials first responders, that may not be enough or the best strategy.[36] The issue according to Pamela Berkowsky, former Assistant to the SECDEF for Civil Support (ATSD-CS), is concern about the federal role by civil libertarians. She asserts that DOD will never be in charge, which seems to be somewhat at odds with Mr. Cohen's comments.[37] Nevertheless, the interagency model is the current norm and the construct by which response capabilities should be measured.

As the LFA for consequence management, FEMA coordinates and conducts planning for multi-agency disaster relief operations. The tool they use is the Federal Response Plan (FRP), which applies to all Federal departments that provide assistance in a major disaster or

emergency. Indeed many Federal agencies to include DOD are signatories and can provide support for a CBRNE incident. Suffice it to say, however, that (as highlighted in Richard Falkenrath's book, *America's Achilles' Heel)* current Federal government specialized capabilities (including military) for responding to CBRNE incidents are "insufficient in scope and resources to respond to significant attacks on cities."[38] Furthermore, the preponderance of resources and capabilities reside in DOD.

DOD RESPONSE CAPABILITIES

Because of the threats it could potentially face during military operations, DOD elements possess a significant NBC defense capability. Additionally DOD has specialized organizations—some composed of DOD civilians and others with active duty military, such as the Marine Corps Chemical Biological Incident Response Force (CBIRF) and the Soldier and Biological Chemical Command (SBCCOM) with its Technical Escort Unit and Chemical Biological Rapid Response Team—that are postured to support the CBRNE HLS mission. But the bulk of the potential response forces are in the USAR, NG and AC Table of Organization and Equipment (TOE) units. Those are the response capabilities that will be addressed in subsequent paragraphs.

U.S. ARMY RESERVE

Approximately 63 percent of the Army's tactical chemical unit (TOE unit) force structure resides in the RC. Most of these units are apportioned to CINCs in support of major theater war (MTW) operations plans (OPLANS).[39] Chemical units in the USAR are echelon above division (EAD) NBC reconnaissance (recon) companies, decontamination (decon) or dual purpose companies, smoke companies and a biodetection company.[40] The units that have a CBRNE response capability are the NBC recon, dual purpose, and biodetection company.

One of the critical aspects of the evolving CBRNE response plan includes integrating RC units to accomplish specific response missions or tasks based on the twelve ESFs of the FRP.[41] The plan addresses both Title 10 units (those under Federal control) and Title 32 units (those under control of the State). The plan for RC integration includes training and equipping one platoon per USAR decon and dual-purpose company to perform casualty decon for ambulatory and non-ambulatory casualties from a CBRNE incident. Additionally, it includes training and equipping one platoon per NBC recon company (15 two person teams) to conduct sampling and casualty extraction. Units capable of performing these functions must be task organized, trained, and properly equipped. The Consequence Management Program Integration Office (CoMPIO) plans to obtain commercial-off-the shelf (COTS) equipment to augment army

common equipment for responding elements.[42] And the U.S. Army Reserve Command is conducting specialized train-the-trainer courses for the decon elements on the Incident Command System (ICS), casualty decon methods, HAZMAT operations, and management of CB casualties. Similarly, they are training the recon teams on ICS, HAZMAT technician training, and National Fire Academy dismounted domestic recon procedures.[43] In the existing force structure the USAR has two NBC recon and 25 decon companies. As of the end of fiscal year (FY) 2000 both recon companies had participated in specialized recon training and 20 of the decon companies had participated in specialized decon training.[44]

Several issues remain, however, before the USAR units will truly be a viable part of the overall military response effort. These include equipment, training, funding and readiness reporting. Currently there is no formal approved equipment set list; the fielding plan has not been developed, thus new equipment training (NET) has not been programmed; and sustainment training and maintenance guidance is lacking. Moreover regarding training, there has been no resolution to the issue of limited training time that must be divided between the CBRNE response mission and the war-related mission essential task list (METL); whether formal situational training exercises and mission training plans will be developed; and when and if this mission will be included in TRADOC doctrine. Additionally, it is unresolved who will pay for the approximate $200k annual cost each unit will require for operations and maintenance. Finally, it must be decided if these units will participate in training assessment model (TAM) evaluations and what standards they will use to report readiness.[45]

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

During testimony to the Senate Armed Services committee in 1999, addressing the role of the National Guard (NG) in domestic CBRNE response, Dr. Hamre, then Deputy Secretary of Defense, made reference to the fact that NG forces are "forward deployed all over America" which makes them ideally suited for the WMD response mission.[46] In fact, it is envisioned the NG WMD-Civil Support Teams (CST)—which are largely (90%) ARNG—will provide the core capability for the technical DOD response in support of FEMA for consequence management.[47]

By nature, consequence management operations are a race against time to save lives, prevent injury, and protect health and safety of the local populace. Consequently, first responders from local governments are the principal source of help. Given that local and state governments are responsible for consequence management, if the response exceeds local responder capabilities the state Adjutant General (AG) can deploy its CST to assist the incident commander. If an incident occurs in a state that does not currently have a CST, such

assistance may be provided from an adjacent state through an interstate compact agreement.[48] As noted previously, the WMD-CSTs are considered the point of the military response spear. They will likely be the first military response and will provide early assessment, initial detection, and technical advice to the incident commander during a WMD event.[49] Further, the CST can facilitate identification of DOD asset requirements to support the overall response effort if federal support is required.

The WMD-CST is a 22-man table of distribution and allowance (non-tactical) unit comprised of six elements: command and control team (two soldiers), operations (four), communications (two), administration/logistics (two), medical (four), and survey (eight).[50] In addition to standard army equipment, each team has a Mobile Analytical Laboratory System (MALS) for field analysis of CB agents and a unified command suite (UCS) to provide communications interoperability among responders on the scene and a reach-back capability.[51] Ten teams were activated in FY 99, 17 began activating in FY 00, and 5 more have been authorized for activation by congress in FY01. Initially the first ten CSTs were to be certified as mission capable in January 2000, but the activation schedule proved to be too ambitious; teams were not fully trained due to the unavailability of equipment such as the MALS and UCS.[52] The result was a failure to achieve an acceptable readiness rating using the established assessment and evaluation criteria. As documented in the FORSCOM publication, "Training and Readiness Oversight of Reserve Component Weapons of Mass Destruction Response Elements Action Plan," the three operational criteria for certification per the 1999 National Defense Authorization Act included:

- An overall readiness level of C3 in all reportable areas in accordance with Army Regulation 220-1, Readiness Reporting;
- An external evaluation administered by First or Fifth U.S. Army, the results of which the state AG would use to determine whether to request certification; and
- A commander's subjective assessment to indicate the unit's ability to perform its mission.[53]

The first ten teams—one located in each FEMA region—have yet to all be certified, although seven have been nominated for certification. The timeline for the 17 teams that began activation in 2000 includes the completion of external evaluations by June 2001. According to Charles Cragin, Principle Deputy Assistant SECDEF for Reserve Affairs, the states where the additional 17 teams were located was based on a careful and objective analysis that places the teams closest to the greatest number of people while minimizing response time within a geographical area and reducing overlap with other teams areas of responsibility.[54] The

distribution thus provided optimum response coverage for the entire U.S. population. Lastly, it appears to be the unique state-based nature of the WMD-CSTs that make them a viable entity since consequence management is principally a state responsibility.

FORSCOM ACTIVE COMPONENT (AC) UNITS

There are several army units that have some capability to support the consequence management mission, but the fact is only in the AC are there robust trained and ready chemical units that train for the NBC defense mission on a daily basis. By far the RC with 63% of chemical unit force structure has more potential capability than AC units, but they only train 39 days a year and must divide that training time between their wartime METL and other requirements, plus their mission readiness levels are generally low. On the other hand, though a much smaller percentage, the AC has EAD chemical force structure in the Continental United States (CONUS) that includes four dual-purpose, two smoke, one NBC recon/decon, one NBC recon, one biodetection company, and two battalion headquarters. Plus, there are six additional chemical companies that are organic to maneuver divisions and cavalry regiments.[55]

The capability and proficiency of AC chemical units is unquestioned. These units have the capability to conduct sustained operations in a contaminated environment and have the devices to detect lethal chemical agents. However, detecting toxic industrial materials (TIM) does pose a problem. Similarly, these units are trained to conduct equipment decontamination primarily in a tactical environment and support the conduct of personnel decontamination. With the publication of FM 3-11.21, MTTP for NBC Aspects of Consequence Management, specific decontamination procedures have been established that focus specifically on civilian HAZMAT operations. In an article on "The Chemical Corps and Domestic Decontamination Operations," Wendy Martin describes training she conducted for her platoon in support of the National Boy Scout Jamboree in 1997.[56] In essence her platoon developed procedures to perform patient decon based on existing doctrine. With the new MTTP units have standardized procedures to train to in lieu of developing their own.

Both AC chemical battalions currently have a METL task related to supporting the CBRNE HLS mission. But according to one relatively new commander, after researching mission requirements with his higher headquarters, corps headquarters, and wartime trace chemical brigade, he could identify no such mission requirement. Consequently, because of high operational tempo and wartime training requirements, he has requested permission to delete the task from his unit's METL. His philosophy is if his unit was to be tasked to support the HLS

CBRNE mission, it would be "come as you are" which translates to no specialized training or equipment.[57]

It appears army rhetoric and even doctrine supports a more prominent role by AC units, but this has not been transmitted through proper channels to warfighting units. AC commanders have a similar challenge as their RC counterparts: balancing HLS mission training requirements with wartime training demands and mission taskings. So even though DOD support for HLS would be enhanced by AC participation, it still has not received the necessary emphasis throughout the chain of command. As an example, this became evident in the summer of 1999 when the FORSCOM commander (after reviewing a trip report) asked his staff proponent for MSCA if FORSCOM units should be directed to include a CBRNE HLS task in their METL. After considering this topic at the action officer and staff principal level, and receiving input from the subordinate corps' (who believed this mission would negatively impact their warfighting mission), it faded into obscurity. To date guidance has yet to be issued from FORSCOM to its subordinate units. If DA as stated in the HLS Army Strategic Plan acknowledges its commitment to HLS, it must plan for and commit resources to the mission and provide specific guidance to the warfighting headquarters.

CONCLUSION

Since 1995 the Federal Government, the Department of Defense, and the Department of the Army have made significant progress in developing policy, guidance and plans to counter the CBRNE terrorist threat to the homeland. Priorities for preparedness and response capabilities have been developed, and resources have begun to be allocated. As has been stated by several prominent defense department personnel and concluded in just as many studies and reports, it's not a question of if a CBRNE terrorist attack will occur, it's a question of when. The reality is there will be an incident and "The Army" (both active and reserve) will be required to play a major role. Even with the strides thus far, much more needs to be done. In reality, to date much of the focus for military support has been on the National Guard and Army Reserve. As stated previously, the NG (primarily) and the USAR (secondarily) because they are "forward deployed" throughout the country, are viewed as the Army's primary early response means. Although U.S. policy and planning considers the Reserve Components as the tip of the response spear, the 90% of the spear that follows the tip must be effective to achieve the desired end of saving lives, protecting health and safety and mitigating the hazard. Thus, it is paramount for DA to continue to improve upon existing competencies and capabilities. This will require an active and more comprehensive response capability by active component units.

To enhance this capability active component commanders and staffs must participate in more detailed planning to improve coordination and integration with civilian responders. Units must be ready to coordinate with and improve their awareness of the many DOD agencies with which they may come in contact when responding. They must gain a thorough familiarity with the FRP, ESFs, and the ICS, and understand the unique nature of civilian decontamination operations, to include requirements, standards, and safety control measures to minimize contamination spread and limit exposure.[58] Further, since training and readiness are inextricably linked, and since army strategy indicates AC units should be ready to support, TRADOC needs to publish a Mission Training Plan (MTP) and develop a program for familiarization training. Last, in addition to standard tactical equipment, some specialized equipment should be procured for storage and use by AC units. All of these things will be required to meet the commitment the Army has made in the Homeland Security Army Strategic Plan: for as it states, it is a critical mission.[59]

RECOMMENDATIONS

Combating the CBRNE terrorist threat to the homeland must ensure close coordination and cooperation between federal, state, and local agencies. A great deal has been done to posture the U.S. to counter and respond effectively to this threat, but much more needs to be done. That said, it is almost unquestioned that a CBRNE terrorist attack on the homeland will require a federal response and "The Army" will be a key player on the response team under the operational control of JTF-CS. The azimuth has been plotted and the direction finds the WMD-CSTs on the point. The rationale for activating these teams and the assistance they provide as part of an initial response are essential. But, they are only the tip of the spear and what follows is equally as important.

Planning, training, equipping, command and control, and integration are all key areas that have been addressed in studies and findings to date, and need to be analyzed and pursued to continue to improve the DOD CBRNE response capability. The Tiger Team report identified an overall need for improved military readiness to respond to a CBRNE event and linked this to training.[60] The team recommended increasing awareness training for the Reserve Component community at large. That same philosophy should be taken and applied to Active Component units, especially those who might have a major role in the technical response effort, i.e., TOE chemical units. The training should really extend beyond familiarization to include incorporation of METL tasks in training, and enhancing the overall skills required for agent detection and decontamination in support of WMD consequence management.

Planning in conjunction with training provide the cornerstone for a robust response capability. USCINCJFCOM has developed a functional plan for responding to CBRNE incidents and accidents within the 48 contiguous states and Headquarters, Department of the Army has developed a strategic plan for "The Army." The next step should be a plan by FORSCOM providing specific guidance to its major subordinate commands to posture forces, particularly those that will support as part of the technical response, for participation in an interagency WMD consequence management response.

Army TOE chemical units have the best tactical NBC contamination avoidance and decontamination equipment in the world. But much of that equipment is indeed designed for use in a tactical and not a domestic environment. There are many equipment systems in use in specialized units that could be made available for tactical units to enhance their capabilities to support a WMD consequence management response. Special emphasis must be placed on acquiring such systems and implementing procedures to address maintenance of those systems.

Last, the National Guard WMD-CSTs and other specialized units under the Army's CB-RRT are capable of providing an immediate or rapid response in support of local or state agencies. But follow-on support will be required to sustain the technical response capability. With a constrained force to meet all contingencies—especially scenarios that conform to the Mission Task Organized Force packages—units must be dual-missioned. Therefore, all AC TOE chemical units should be required to include CBRNE consequence management tasks in their METL and TRADOC should develop such tasks for incorporation into unit MTPs.

In summary, the environment described in the biblical statement about a plentiful harvest with few laborers parallels the environment for The Army as it postures to support the HLS CBRNE consequence management mission in conjunction with being prepared for two major theater wars and conducting army transformation. Therefore, DA must maintain a full-court press to organize, equip, and train units to timely, effectively, and efficiently support the LFA in efforts to manage the consequences of CBRNE incidents. There is indeed much more to be done with austere resources. Nevertheless, the importance of the mission demands DA's total commitment.

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